

Sept. 2009-1

U.S.S. LOWNDES - APA 154

September 2009 NEWSLETTER

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To Codi, Ray Casey, and all at Military Reunion Planners:

I am sorry to have to inform you that we need to cancel the U.S.S. Lowndes Reunion scheduled for September 2009 due to lack of interest, illness, aging population of our group and the economy. We appreciate all the hard work you have done to set up the hotel, put together a tour package, etc. I will contact you after the first of the year (2010) should our group decide to plan another reunion. I fear that this will probably never happen – our youngest veteran is 74 and our oldest is 90, making each year more difficult to attend. We also want to thank all the staff at Military Reunion Planners for all their hard work over the years making each of our reunions a success.

Sincerely,

Jan Robertson-Trober
USS Lowndes
Reunion Coordinator

It is with great sadness that we are forced to cancel the 2009 Milwaukee Reunion. However, I desire to remain editor of the Lowndes newsletters in an effort to keep all Reunion Group Members informed of activities of above mentioned. My only request is that information and items of interest be forwarded to me. Continuation of publishing the newsletter in hopes that there will be a renewed interest once more in having future reunions. It has been a pleasure serving the former shipmates, spouses and friends, etc. Thank you for your trust in me since our first reunion in 1989 in St. Louis, MO.

Wm. "Bud" Kautz – CCBW
Your Lowndes newsletter editor.

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This issue of the USS Lowndes newsletter is very late due to many reasons. Distractions on the home front and also lack of responses from the reunion group with items of interest. Have dug into the files for information. In doing so I have come across several items contributed by David Brinkman and Stuart Hyde that will be used in this newsletter. Some of these will bring back memories of experiences on board the Lowndes. There is also one particular item to be decided on by the group. In the case that there may not be any reunions in the future I have contacted David regarding the possibility of setting up an endowment fund for a web site (www.ussslowndes.net). The cost of this web site is about \$95 a year and \$15 a year to maintain the name. As David has mentioned at 4% interest, a fund of \$2500 might earn enough money to cover the web costs. He also has suggested he would like to submit the data from the web site to the National Archives to ensure that it is not lost and available to future generations. I, for one am totally in favor of this course of action. At the present we are short of the above amount. Please let us have your comments regarding this action.

David has offered to follow up on this. **PLEASE, PLEASE** respond to this proposal as quickly as possible with any suggestions and if approval by the reunion group is forthcoming David can start on it as soon as possible.

Stuart Hyde

I guess we all knew that one day there would be no more reunions. For the past several years, I have been able to shake off the feeling of important loss. I learned about the Lowndes web site and the reunions shortly after my fellow officers had died – Al Resetar, George (Shen) Adams, E. Max Cole, Chuck Munson, and others. That did not spoil the three reunions I did attend. During my time on the Lowndes I wasn't close to the enlisted men who were at these reunions, but it took no time at all for me to become comfortable around them and soon became very much a part of them. An era has ended. Someone once said, "it ended, not with a bang, but with a whimper." I don't buy the idea that any Lowndesmen ever whimpered. Only focus on the adventures we shared, the feelings of accomplishment that we felt at Iwo Jima and Okinawa. We were quite uncertain of our ability to pull it off, But, damn it, we Did pull it off!!!! I relived the reminiscences we shared at the reunions. It was there that I learned how Lowndes enlisted men had taken, from the git-go, the measure of those who had been commissioned as "officers and gentlemen." I believe that those boat officers I mentioned above – as well as I – knew that we could only succeed if we came clean with cox'ns, signalmen, mechanics, radiomen, yeomen, etc., about our "greatness," and asked for their help. I also knew of a few whose names I won't include here, who really believed they were superior and acted as such. I'm sure ways were found to frustrate and convey contempt to them, as they well deserved!

A few questions from Stuart looking for answers:

1. After Okinawa, why did we sit at Saipan for FORTY-SEVEN DAYS (From April 18 until June 4th, 1945) without undergoing further training exercises? (We had some shipboard drills, and on May 7th, a group of officers and 98 enlisted men took a one-day anti-aircraft class.) If the U.S. was planning to invade Japan, why weren't we being prepared for our part in the invasion?

2. Why, on June 6, were we suddenly sent to Espiritu Santos, remaining there until June 26, a trip of 5,689 miles? We were told that we were sent as part of a flotilla to bring back to Guam essential war materials that had been left behind. What did we bring back? Was it of any value? Was it needed for our invasion of Japan? Were we sent on this trip just to give us something to do?

3. Why, on July 11, were we sent from Guam to San Francisco? The war was not over, and the Japanese would not announce their surrender until August 14th.

4. Why did they dry-dock our ship in Oakland? Did that mean they were readying us for the next invasion? Preparing our ship for the invasion of the Japanese home islands?

I've thought about these things for 64 years. Does anyone have any answers?

G. S. Adams III

David Brinkman, your web-site is a tribute to the men of the USS Lowndes. I found your web-site extremely interesting and informative. I am the son of G. S. Adams Jr. jg. The memories I have of my father's accounts of WWII were brought alive once again as I viewed the web-site.

Jim Vaughan

Bud, received your e-mail and the Iwo Jima attachments. Thanks so much for taking the time with me. Your "Iwo" project is a work of art, you did a great job in researching and setting it all down. Did you ever consider doing the same for Okinawa? Or do you know of any of your shipmates on the Lowndes that may have done the same? I have yet to contact Mr. Hyde about his similar work on "Iwo" but will be doing so soon.

"I can't take all the credit for the Iwo Jima booklet, I just related my shipmates feelings and experiences. Several years ago I attempted to garner information regarding the crew's experiences they had on Okinawa, but just didn't get very many responses. However, Stuart has composed a booklet regarding Okinawa."

Robin Hardy Kerr

Randall and I enjoyed the San Francisco reunion and looking forward to another one in 2010! I am sorry that the 2009 reunion will not happen but, sometimes, life gets in the way of what we want to do. Not a day goes by that I don't think of my father (and by extension, all of you). Fondly.

David Brinkman

I always think (during the month of June) about the Navy commendation that my Dad got (as noted in the deck log). I was hoping that I would find an entry about a time when he got into a little trouble but I guess the officers let it slide. This was a story my Dad had written down around 1995. I think he planned on giving it to Bud for the newsletter but never got around to it. The story was about an incident that occurred during the Lowndes boat landing training at Mauri. By coincidence, the event involved just the three corpsmen that would later be the only unscathed beach-party corpsmen at Iwo (all three received this citation.) My Dad convinced Jerome Frieder and Wes Follett to walk down the beach and over a hill to get a hamburger at Mauri while they were awaiting boats to return to the beach. Wes and Jerry did not want to do this but they gave in. By the time the three returned, all the boats had returned and left again and they were stranded. I did find an entry in the deck log that mentioned a boat being "late" but no disciplinary action was noted. From what I know about my Dad and what other sailors have said, he was a hardworking and likeable guy so the officers probably gave him and his buddies a break.

John Vernale

Attending reunions has become a problem with my left knee, I had a torn meniscus. Had surgery 4 months ago and it's not going well, I may have to get a replacement, also I have a balance problem,

along with light headness and blurred vision, some of my problems is due to the medications I need to take. Plane rides makes the condition worse.

"Hang in there John, we all wish you a speedy recovery."

Keith & Lorraine Richards

Thanks for informing us of the cancellation of the 2009 reunion. We have been to several of your reunions and enjoyed them very much. You are a wonderful group. We have given considerable thought to attending once again, but family matters always seemed to come up. We have never met David Brinkman and would like to meet him. His Dad was so good to my Mother and often communicated with her. Hopefully if there is a reunion in the future we would certainly try to attend. We are in good health, except for the normal aging process. We enjoy the newsletters.

Jim Vaughan

Please excuse this prolonged delay in responding to our phone conversation we had some time back. I guess I've finally reached that phase in my life where "senior Moments" occur more often than I would like them to. I enjoy the Lowndes newsletters you send out, so "Yes," I would very much look forward to receiving them, as long as it will remain a "Labor of Love" with you. And not something that you feel is not worth the effort on your part. In going through my files I found a 43 page 8-1/2 x 11 "Iwo Jima-Lest we Forget" and wondered if this is the item we discussed. I also located my roster of the Reunion group Shipmates and Honorary Members, including David Brinkman's South Carolina address, but have yet to make contact with him concerning the "Ship's Log" and other information from the web site. Enclosed check for dues.

"Jim was related to Chief Botti. and had been mentioned in an earlier newsletter. He is interested in many facets of the Lowndes history. Have passed Stuart Hydes' address to him re the book Stuart authored."

Leo O'Brien

Margaret and I attended Arthur Rauseo's funeral. It was a first class funeral with about 15 volunteer firemen as honor guards and his casket was transported on a smaller truck to the church and to the cemetery. From in front of the firehouse six of these men walked the last quarter mile beside the "hearse" truck. I felt proud to have been a friend of Arthur's. The family was most appreciative of the flowers from his former shipmates. Some of the money was donated to the Alzheimer Association.

Lebby Dyer

Sorry to hear that the Milwaukee reunion had to be cancelled. Just a suggestion maybe next year in Washington, DC to see the WWII memorial, or a cruise as there would not be ant tours to plan. Just a suggestion. We just came back from our granddaughter's wedding, over 300 at the wedding and 250 at the reception. She just graduated from Indiana University and will be teaching just west of Indianapolis as a special education teacher. John is doing as well as he can, he is losing his eye sight. Makes it hard for him to travel. We probably wouldn't have made the reunion this year anyway.

"In answer to your suggestions, first we have been to Washington previously. Second, a cruise was brought up at one of our business meetings, but did not receive much enthusiasm from the group. Does not leave us much of a choice for any future reunions and only hope that outlook will change."

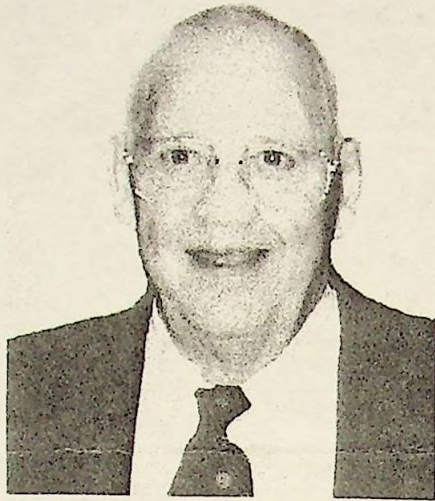
Donald Morton



This picture of Seaman Ellis Robert R. Morton was taken in 1944. Born December 14, 1926 in Denver, CO. The oldest boy of a family of 8 boys and 6 girls. He joined the Navy in April 6, 1944 and received boot training at Farragut Naval Station in Idaho, and was assigned to port in Seattle, WA and then overseas. Assigned to the USS Lowndes September 14, 1944 (Plank Owner.), Not a member of the Beach Party. He went ashore to participate in the Iwo Jima invasion operations. During the course of operations he lost his life while under enemy fire. Joe Freitas said that he and Ellis volunteered to help deliver supplies to the beach. When they hit the beach Ellis picked up a gun and told Joe that he was, "Going to get a Jap." He jumped out and ran up the beach. When he reached the top of the hill, he was mowed down by enemy gun-fire. The officers (and the Navy) never figured out what happened to him. His family just got a telegram saying that he was MIA and that was updated after the war to KIA but with no more additional information.

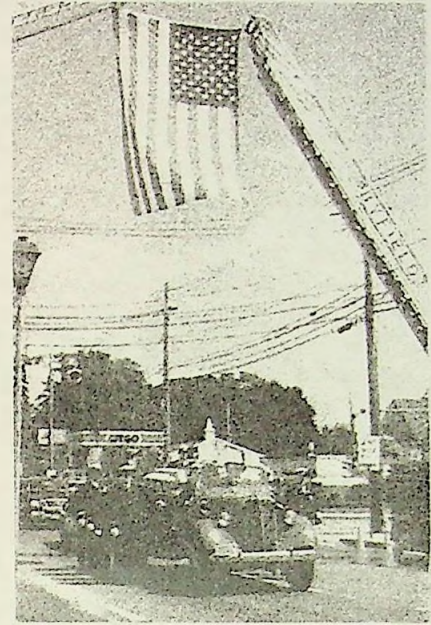
"Don said his family assumed that Ellis had been killed in a kamikaze attack on the ship. Don and his 5 brothers all honored their older brother by serving in the Korean and Viet Nam wars."

ARTHUR JOHN RAUSEO



June 10, 1926 – July 27, 2009

Arthur enlisted in the Navy at the age of 16 (He lied about his age) at Malden, MA. Boarded the Lowndes – APA 154 Sept. 14, 1944 in Portland, OR becoming a “Plank Owner” and served on the Lowndes until April 17, 1946. His watch and general quarters stations were in the engine room. The Lowndes was decommissioned in 1946 and he received an honorable discharge as an EM2/c. He traveled to the South Pacific on the USS Lowndes and USS Deede – DE 263. After he got out of the Navy he married Margie – Marjorie Palmer and persuaded her to leave the city and move to the small town of Georgetown, MA where he operated the Georgetown Shoe and Clothing store on East Main Street. The doors to “the Store” and home were always open. Family and friends would stop by either place for advice or a chat. It was Arthur’s style to greet you with a few wise cracks and...if you dared to disagree with him, you were told to “get the hell out of here.” Not really meaning it. Arthur took great pride in being a Georgetown Fireman and served as a volunteer for over 50 years. He was preceded in death by his wife Marjorie M. Rauseo. Survived by his son; James A. Rauseo & wife, Gina; Daughter; Sharon Rauseo Widman & husband, Martin; and four granddaughters; Alex & Megan Rauseo & Catherine & Sarah Widman; by his goddaughter, Marion Donovan.



A fitting sendoff for Georgetown’s Art Rauseo

It was quite a sight when two 100-foot fire engine ladders towered over a street in front of a fire station, with a huge American flag hanging from them. It is an honor for a firefighters funeral, and in this case for former acting Fire Chief Arthur Rauseo. His influence can be seen throughout this town in many buildings, and many of it’s people. In addition to full firefighters honors he received full military honors as well. At the cemetery, sailors in dress white folded the flag from his coffin, and presented it to the family. A Navy veteran played Taps. Navy veteran Gerry Muise gave him a very special send off. As if Arthur was disembarking from his ship, Muise piped him on his way and announced, Arthur Rauseo, U.S. Navy departing.

“Arthur and Leo O’Brien we co-hosts of the 1993 reunion in Boston. Personally I will miss his helping hand at the reunions, he was always there to assist me to climb stairs, board tour busses and when he, Leo & John Vernale went to a large shopping mall he noticed my difficulty in walking and arranged for a wheel chair for me. I’m proud to have been a personal friend of his. He will be missed very much by all who came in contact with him.”

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David Brinkman

I have decided to go back and convert all the old reunion videos (that I have) to digital and upload them to the web site. I'm doing these at a higher quality than what I have done in the past. You will need at least a Cable or hi-speed DSL Internet connections to view these.

I have a 6 hour VHS tape that I believe Max Cole sent to me many years back which seems to cover the first reunions (1989-?). I also have the Texas, Myrtle Beach, and West Palm Beach videos on VHS tapes.

I just uploaded a few segments from the West Palm Beach reunion (1997). These will only work on a PC (not a Mac or WebTV). I also put them on DVD so I can send that to those that do not have a PC and broadband Internet connection. Here are links to the first clips from the West Palm Beach reunion in 1997:

1997 West Palm Beach: Registration and Hospitality Room and Dog races (18.5 minutes):

http://www.dobrinkman.net/lowndes/video/lowndes1997_checkin.wmv

1997 West Palm Beach: Men and Women group photo shoot and Lovelies meetings (11 minutes):

http://www.dobrinkman.net/lowndes/video/lowndes1997_groupphoto_Lovelies.wmv

1997 West Palm Beach: Mens business meeting (43 minutes):

http://www.dobrinkman.net/lowndes/video/lowndes1997_mens_meeting.wmv

"I recently received an e-mail from Stuart Hyde citing a suggestion by David Brinkman re future reunions. He suggests we forget all the reunion planning, and just decide to meet for a few days for informal fraternization. Looking back, it seems to me (Stuart) that most rewarding moments at the three reunions I attended were during our times together in hospitality rooms. That's where I really felt closest to my shipmates, and where I learned of all the tricks the men played on the officers!"

"Once again, I ask for responses and suggestions as to what the possibilities are open to us in the future."

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Bill Fletcher

As I look back on my time aboard the USS Lowndes – APA 154 I think of the many events that are stuck in my memory – taking a salt water shower and a one minute (or was it 15 seconds?) rinse off *with* fresh water - chipping rust – wearing my duty belt to gain access to the refrigerator – doing guard duty on the bow at night and experiencing the up and down on a rough sea – responding to a "Red Alert" and subsequently being cast upon the shore of Okinawa by two black soldiers on a Dukk - spending the night in a cave – seeing General Geiger in his underwear next morning being happily returned to the Lowndes. All this was more than 65 years ago but just as vivid in my mind as it was at the time it occurred. Please do not go to further expense to mail a newsletter. I enjoyed all the togetherness which I observed in the Lowndes group. It was a good cruise. At age 83+ I'll gather up my shelter half (tent) and wander into a certain future. The best to you all.

"Bill thanks for the check"

I was at the VA awhile back and heard a disturbing rumor. The US Navy has discontinued the initiation crossing the Equator. Someone has said it was hazing. Too bad, it has been a Navy Tradition for so many years."